



Aruban Youth are ready to compete in the Paso Fino World Championships

On Tuesday evening, June 20, the Directiva di Oranizacion Caballero Arubano (DOCA) introduced the young equestrians that will represent Aruba at the 6th CONFEPASO Championships taking place in Kissimmee, Florida over the July 4 holiday. CONFEPASO is a confederation of Paso Fino riders from The United States, Colombia, Venezuela, Puerto Rico, Aruba, and Curaçao. A gala event at the Monte Blanco Ranch in Moko presented the team of twenty-nine youngsters ranging in ages from five years to twenty-two who will travel to the U.S. on July 3 to compete. These competitions are considered the most important Paso Fino competitions in the western hemisphere.

The children will participate in six categories, divided by male and female divisions. These categories are Mini (ages four to six), Pre-Infantil (six to eight years), Infantil (nine to eleven years), Junior (twelve to fourteen years) Youth (fifteen to seventeen years) and Aficionados (Adult, ages eighteen to twenty-four).

The young people will be tested for not only their skill on horseback, but also all around horsemanship; first being required to pass a written test before competing in the trials. They are paired with strange horses by lottery and are then given two days get acquainted with their new partner. Paso Fino riding is a very precise and demanding discipline and requires supreme mastery on the part of the rider, and a strong rapport with their mount.

Head Coach Igor Kock expressed supreme confidence in his team, and confessed, hopefully, that he expects them to bring home at least three gold medals. Chayon Kock, winning World Champion Mini Rider at the age of four during the last championships, is now seven years old and competing in the Pre-Infantil Category. He is going to Kissimmee to defend his title. Melanie Wever, only five years old, is Aruba's sole entry in the Mini Category this year.

THE NEWS wishes their dynamic young equestrians "Bon Exitó" in Kissimmee, and the hope they bring home the gold for Aruba!